

SCOTTSDALE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION REPORT



To: Transportation Commission
From: Susan Conklu, Senior Transportation Planner
Subject: Bike Share Program Update
Meeting Date: May 21, 2015

ITEM IN BRIEF

Action: Information

Purpose:

Provide information on bike share systems and GRID update.

Background:

Bike share is a service that offers bicycles to people from self-serve bike stations. The bikes are typically used for short, spontaneous trips between destinations. Often, bike share is combined with other modes such as transit and offers the flexibility of taking a one-way bike trip. Bike share differs from traditional bike rental because the trips are intended to be short, often less than 30-minutes or two miles in distance.

Bikes are Global Positioning System (GPS) enabled to track each bike and generate reports on total trips in the system. The bicycles are designed to be comfortable and theft-resistant. The station locations are planned to connect to major destinations and transit lines.

Locally, the GRID Bike Share memberships include hourly, monthly, student, and annual options. The first 60 minutes of bike use are free with a membership; however, there are overtime fees after the first 60 minutes. The 60 minutes can be broken up into multiple trips. Technology allows users to pay at the station, through the internet, through a Smartphone, or on the bike. Overage fees are \$5.00 per additional hour, prorated to the minute. So, a 30-minute trip costs \$2.50 extra. The maximum overage charge is \$25.00 per day. The bikes can be locked anywhere at regular bike racks at the end of the trip. There is a \$2.00 fee for locking a bike outside a station and a \$20 fee for locking outside the system area to encourage users to return the bikes to stations. This is intended minimize the rebalancing and operations work by GRID staff. There are two shifts for staff who rebalance bikes daily.

Phoenix launched their GRID Bike Share program on November 25th, 2014, with Tempe and Mesa planning to follow in fall 2015 or spring 2016. The rescheduled launch occurred due to some improvements made in the GPS software, the desire to launch during a cooler season, and to coincide it with the opening of the METRO light rail in downtown Mesa. Currently in Phoenix, Salt River Project, TJ Vernon LLC, CCBG Architects, Mother Bunch Brewing, Visit Phoenix, Phoenix Public Library, WebPT, and Red Development LLC are sponsors. The contribution of each sponsor varies and can include 3-rack Stop and Shop stations, basket assets, or full stations.

To date, GRID has had 17,700 total trips and 4,100 users who were mostly prepaid hourly instead of annual members. The peak days of usage have been Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. On weekdays, the peak hours have been during lunchtime as well as morning and evening commutes.

Common Issues with Planning the System:

- Picking the best business model: ownership, operations, and financing.
- Contract
- Launch delays are common due to procurement or software issues.
- Budgeting - bike share is eligible for federal grants but cities must provide local match.

- Public outreach to get input and inform people about the program. Many people haven't heard of bike share but as GRID staff attend public events and host a booths and as more people see the bikes downtown they are requesting bike share in other areas/cities.
- Permitting for stations and advertising in city right-of-way must be addressed.
- Density of service areas can impact the location of stations.
- Car parking spaces may need to be removed to provide space for stations.
- Insufficient bikeways or bike network gaps in station/service area – best to have good network in place first or in conjunction with launch of bike share.
- Linked to transit routes/light rail/other rail – stations should be located near 1st and last mile and near transit centers if any exist.

Common Issues with Operations:

- Ridership does not pay for the annual costs – it must be subsidized and budgeted annually like transit.
- Sponsorships – ensuring there are enough for the needed funding this year/future years.
- There is no way to predict how many people will prefer annual over hourly memberships.
- Rebalancing bikes to empty stations and making sure there are empty spaces available to park bikes.
- Software/apps - GRID is 1st system to use Social Bicycle's new equipment.
- Equipment - brightness of the back panel screen on each bike is getting adjusted to be more visible in Arizona's bright sunlight.
- Equity issues/access and cost for lower income users, people who don't have credit cards, people with mobility/balance issues on a two-wheel bicycle.
- Addressing the differences between experienced riders and new riders.

Current Status:

Options for Scottsdale to implement a program are being evaluated. Likely destinations would be downtown, resorts, Indian Bend Wash, SkySong, and other locations providing connections to Tempe and Phoenix activity centers, transit routes and light rail stations.